

SUPERNATURAL INFLUENCES
IN
CLASSICAL TRAGEDY

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SUPERNATURAL INFLUENCES IN CLASSICAL TRAGEDY.

THESIS

by

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TRANSLATIONS

- Aeschylus - - - Lewis Campbell.
Sophocles - - - Arthur S. Way.
Euripides - - - Arthur S. Way.
Seneca - - - E. I. Harris.

NOTE: The last has been altered in some instances to conform to the ordinary rules of English grammar.

Nos, ubi dicidimus,
Quo pius Aeneas, quo dives Tullus et Ancus,
Pulvis et umbra sumus.

SUPERNATURAL INFLUENCES IN CLASSICAL TRAGEDY.

"Sunt aliquid manes: letum non omnia finit,
Luridaque evictos effugit umbra rogos."

So sang Propertius in an age when men had forgotten the untroubled simple acceptance of the supernatural that Homer's heroes knew, and the nobler steadfast faith in the final vindication of right against wrong, that Aeschylus sang; in an age when only his own great passionate heart insistently demanded an after life for his beloved dead, that it might still adore her memory when herself had left him. Whether he really believed that Cynthia awaited him among the shadows, or whether his tired troubled mind only endeavoured to comfort itself with vain fond memories of his lost love, will never now be known: at all events, it was not long afterwards that he too bade farewell to the world, and joined the "wan shadows" of whom he had sung.

And whether in search of comfort, or whether in dread of danger, from the world of the unseen to which he is continually endeavouring to pierce, man's rest-

less imagination has striven ceaselessly, all down the centuries, to build up for itself an image of a life in the realm of disembodied spirits; refusing, alike in its greatest simplicity and its greatest sophistication, to believe that "no life lives forever."

As persistent, too, has been his conviction that these spirits, freed from the limitations and trammels of the body, return to the scene of their former life, there to haunt those whom they have loved or hated, or those who are bound to them by some more mysterious, more subtle tie; and to take a far more important, because at the same time more unhampered and more unperceived, part, in the human affairs that seem to go on without them.

i

In the dim far ages before Homer lived and sang of the heroes with whose deeds the world was ringing, men feared the pale intangible phantoms that were released by the darkness, to roam, bodiless and ghostly, over the still earth while the living slept. Who could say what was being wrought by these invisible agents who, set free now from the hindrance of the body, flitted at will through barred doors and over lofty walls, whom nothing and no one could stay in their course? One saw them only sometimes in dreams, when his own spirit wandered away for a time; but always, after the sun had sunk beneath the ocean, one could feel their haunting presences peopling the air about him with awful half-seen images and wierd unearthly sounds. Assuredly they must be infinitely more powerful than the living who could not even perceive their movements. What unlimited power for vengeance they must possess! And at the thought the man who had wronged the dead started up in sudden terror, the more dread because no visible image met his sight as he strove to pierce the darkness and find out the fearsome thing that

floated just beyond his reach, yet able to take him in its grip at will-- able, doubtless, to inflict on him tortures undreamed of before.

But perhaps--

A sudden gleam of hope relaxed the hold of the deadly fear that bound him. Surely, in some way, he could persuade the stern spirit to return beneath the earth, whither he had fondly thought to consign it along with its body. Surely he could do something to atone for his sin, to propitiate the vengeance-demanding wraith that haunted his bedside and banished sleep. Blood-- doubtless blood would satisfy its claims; and what matter if it were not his own blood? He would yield it double, triple measure: nay, blood a hundred fold should the spirit have to sate its avenging thirst. Food also, if haply in its earthly wanderings it required earthly nourishment. He would do more-- he would build it an altar and pay his dues thereon as to a god. Perhaps the spirit was a god now-- who could tell? Yet what honour he could render it would never come amiss. And so his nightmare-ridden spirit was soothed, and he slept again.

Not far off, perhaps, another man too was lying restless in the dark. His conscience was clear: no crime against the living or the dead could be laid to his charge; yet sleep was far from his pillow. Surely it could not be all coincidence! These persistent misfortunes that dogged his footsteps, these sudden calamities that descended upon him utterly without warning, overwhelming him in hopelessness-- must there not be some baleful influence directing their malignant operations? Ah, he remembered-- he had it now! Years ago, as a little child, he had listened as he sat at his mother's knee to her tales of his mighty ancestors. Light and shadow chased one another swiftly over the pictures as she painted them one by one before his eager imagination. This man had carved out a kingdom by his high prowess: this had gained wealth by his wise and beneficent rule, and gone in peace to his well-earned rest. But this-- ah, had not this man in his hasty anger at some youthful fault, invoked a curse upon his own son and all his posterity? This cruel tide of misfortune could be but one thing-- the dreadful curse was bearing its harvest. His ancestor

himself, a spirit now and no longer bound by the fetters that restrain the living, was directing the fulfilment of those potent words of his, uttered so long ago. Doom stared the hapless wretch in the face.

But-- what did the ghostly phantom really desire? Would not the death of other victims satisfy his horrid craving? Might not the unhappy man who now tossed sleeplessly to and fro, win for himself and his children freedom from this fearful influence, by endeavouring with what reverent offerings he might, to propitiate the spirit that was wreaking such dire havoc? Surely he could but try. Blood-- ah yes, blood above all would doubtless be acceptable: the blood of the foes of his house must be sweet to the dead man: the blood of sheep and oxen, when the humans were not available, might serve to glut his appetite for awhile. So the tossing form on the couch grew quieter, and at length sank to sleep.

The altars were built, the sacrifices made. Fear ceased continually to haunt the bedsides of men who felt secure by reason of doing all their imagination could suggest to lull the ghosts to sleep. Then one day another man had a sudden thought. Hard pressed by his foes, he

remembered the offerings he had made to the soul of his ancestor. If such offerings appeased the spirit's wrath, might not further sacrifices actually enlist its aid? What might not a man do, with a powerful spirit or two on his side? At once he set everything in order. Nothing was to be spared that could possibly give honour or pleasure to the departed soul. All that the mind of man could devise was done to pay homage to the manes of that particular ancestor whose aid he implored. After all this, the ghost would clearly be ungrateful in the extreme not to manifest some practical appreciation of the devotion of its descendant. Of course there was always the doubt, only to be solved by the event, as to whether one had really fulfilled everything that the spirit might require. But usually the chance was worth taking.

And as the functions of disembodied spirits increased in number, so did their personalities in variety. Instead of himself executing vengeance on a still living foe, the ghost might command the services of dread creatures known as Eumenides-- a precautionary euphemism for the most frightful phantoms men have ever imagined. Other similar apparitions began to take definite shape in men's

minds-- almost before their very eyes. Various fiends and demons, sometimes helpful, sometimes baleful, now impartially carrying out the course of justice, now merely serving the caprice of some god, or their own, peopled the lower world with a teeming multitude that must have cramped considerably the living accommodations of the mere dead.

Moreover, such a population could not be left without rulers. They must have a king. Very well, let us set Pluto over the realms of darkness. His countenance itself shall be dark and very terrible, his sway relentless and ruthlessly just. But must not even so fearful a being possess a consort? Who more fitting than the daughter of the Earth-Goddess? Persephone shall be Queen of the Lower World, therefore, and share with Pluto the rule over the dead.

In due time various assistants and subordinates were found, and each fitted into his own particular groove. The administration of justice became admirable. Men who during their lifetime had been outstanding examples of wickedness, became terrible examples in the lower world. Men who on the other hand had outshone their

fellows in courage and all the noble virtues, lived a happy and carefree, if somewhat useless, existence in Elysium.

As for the great masses-- those who while upon earth had drifted to and fro on the misty flats-- was it a precaution against over-population, one wonders, that caused them to drink a compulsory draught of forgetfulness and return once more to the earth? This at any rate was the manner in which they were disposed of. One's own ancestors, of course, were of far too much importance to be comprehended in this last class, so that one must continue to pay them due honour at their tombs.

Gradually, therefore, there grew up an extensive Chthonic cult, quite apart from the worship of the Olympian deities, who might not interfere with it in any way. The gods of the nether world claimed their own sacrifices, their own observances, their own tributes-- exercised their own functions, and wielded their own most powerful sway.

ii

The worship of the dead, thus gradually developing, acquired in time an elaborate and careful ritual, attended to with the most minute observance. Offerings for various purposes contained definite ingredients, were poured out in a certain prescribed manner, and accompanied by recognized formulas of speech. All the features of this ritual were extremely important and must be carried out to the letter.

These ceremonies began, logically enough, with the burial of the dead man. The body was disposed of in the customary way-- originally by burial, later by cremation; the ashes in this latter case being carefully gathered up and sealed in an urn, which was in its turn deposited in the tomb. Tombs were either built or carved out of the solid rock.

Consider for example the manner in which the funeral of Patroclus was carried out by Achilles. After taking immediate vengeance on Hector for having slain his friend, Achilles was approached during the night by the soul of Patroclus, who demanded instant burial. In the morning, therefore, the followers of Achilles marched

out in solemn procession, carrying the dead warrior. Having sheared off locks of their hair, they laid these upon the body, which they then wrapped in the fat of oxen and sheep, whose dead carcasses were laid alongside. Oil and honey were next poured out over the dead man. After this his four horses and two dogs were slain, along with twelve captive Trojan youths; and all were burnt in the pyre that consumed the body of Patroclus. All night the fire burned, and all night Achilles poured out dark offerings of wine upon the earth, calling the while upon the soul of his friend. The next morning he extinguished the fire with the wine; and, having reverently gathered up the ashes of Patroclus, enclosed them in a golden casket, and laid them in the tomb.

Burial was very necessary for the sake of the dead, who, until their bodies were thus disposed of, wandered homeless upon the shores of Styx, vainly endeavouring to find rest in either world. Still more, however, was it necessary for the sake of the living, whose minds were by no means easy while any precautions remained untaken to confine the ghost strictly to its proper sphere. Cremation, of course, was from this point

of view decidedly the safer alternative. Should the spirit return, by any chance, to the upper air, it would not find a handful of ashes attractive as a habitation, even a temporary one. The destruction of the body, therefore, removed one instrument from the reach of any ghost inclined to caprice. Besides, the phantom, provided by the burial rites with a proper home in the underworld, would be most unreasonable to attempt to leave it, and must in that case be dealt with more diplomatically. A few judicious offerings, a permanent altar, and ceremonies indicative of sufficient reverence, and carried out with sufficient elaboration, should be enough to lay any ghost. Such tomb-altars, with traces of the rituals observed in connection with them, have been unearthed in ancient Mycenae, and bear witness to the high stage of development which this form of worship attained.

As to the nether gods, who had come to assume so much of the dignity, so many of the functions and powers, of the dead, their worship grew by leaps and bounds. Reverence for them became so profound that men dared not even name them openly, but resorted to all manner

of euphemisms when referring to them. Special cults known as "Mysteries" grew up and developed with amazing rapidity. The secret of their ritual was closely guarded, and initiates were promised great and splendid privileges in the future life. The principal "Mysteries" were the Orphic and the Eleusinian.

With these Mysteries there was soon associated the worship of Dionysus, who eventually almost supplanted the other deities. With him came Hecate, Queen of the Witches, followed by a crew of souls who had not been given proper reverence in burial, who had been violently slain, or who had died prematurely. These spirits, being thus unable to rest, were borne on the wings of the wind along with the goddess and her hounds, bearing calamity in their train. Nightmares, madness, epilepsy, apparitions, and ill dreams, followed in their wake. Mistress of magic, her votaries on earth possessed colossal power. Special sacrifices were therefore offered to her.

Altogether, the worship of the various chthonic deities and spirits assumed far greater importance than that of the Olympians. As these latter gods became more

human, so did their dark counterparts in Hades acquire more awful and more supernatural attributes. What was considered their due, what their power, what their manner of life, what the nature of their activity, in the writings of the great classical tragedians, becomes now the object of interest.

iii

First may be considered the Curses, which had come to assume personality sufficient to exact vengeance or direct other powers in so doing. Once called into being by man or god, a Curse might act either on its own initiative, or subject to the one who had invoked it. It might, on the other hand, be appeased, if it had been originally directed against oneself.

In the works of Aeschylus Curses are very considerable forces, being as irrevocable as the decrees of the gods themselves. We may first examine Curses in action, which have been previously invoked.

In the *Seven Against Thebes*, the whole plot of course is part of the Oedipus-cycle, the disastrous fate that overtakes the whole house of Laius, who has murdered the son of Pelops and been cursed therefor. But this curse has been succeeded by others; and the one actually operating in this play is that pronounced by Oedipus against his two sons. It is specifically mentioned by Eteocles in lines 695-7, as urging him on to slay his brother and be slain himself.

Cruelly near in kin, my father's curse,

Close on fulfilment, with dry tearless look
 Tells of things more desired than death's delay.
 It has called into play a demon of vengeance (709).

Fate rages, for the curse of Oedipus
 Is come to ripeness.

Curses are very potent, says the Chorus in ll. 766-8.

When dawns the fate-appointed day,
 The aged curse is hard to allay.

Once here, destruction rides not past

Till those are fallen beneath the blast—etc.

In ll. 833-4 the curse of Oedipus is again mentioned by
 the Chorus as having been fulfilled in the death of his
 sons.

O fraught with gloom

Curse of the sire upon the race fulfilled!

With horror at my heart my veins are chilled.

And again in ll. 893-4.

O curse of maddening power, directing blow for blow!

In ll. 951-3 the curses are quite personified, and are
 pictured as singing a song of triumph over the ruin they
 have wrought.

At the last

A troop of curses shrilled the battle-shout

Putting the race to a perpetual rout.

In the Choephoroe, ll. 692-6, a curse is once more spoken of as being in action. This of course has been inherited by the house of Tantalus.

O ill-averted curse upon this house,

How like a kite hast thou descried our lamb,

How like an archer pierced him from afar,

When seeming laid within a peaceful fold!

Curses are invoked upon various persons, usually one's enemies, but sometimes oneself, in a number of instances. In the Choephoroe, ll. 405-9, Orestes solemnly calls on the Curses to aid in the work of vengeance for Agamemnon's death.

Where in your power to save,

Lords of the grave?

O curse, of endless might,

From lips long lost to light,

We, last of Atreus' race,

Implore thy dreadful grace,

Reft of our halls, and outlawed from our right.

Attempts, more or less successful, to propitiate curses, also occur. In the Seven Against Thebes, ll. 69-73, Eteocles prays the curse, which he identifies with the vengeance it rouses, to stay its hand.

Zeus, Earth, ye guardian deities, and thou
 Mightiest of all for ill, curse of my sire,
 Extirpate not with ravage of the foe
 My country, I entreat you; spare her fall!
 Destroy not homes where Grecian voices sound.

The same identification is made in ll. 700-1, by the Chorus, who advise him to offer sacrifices to appease it.

The Erinnys-storm shall leave thy home and land
 When Heaven hath free-will offerings from thy hand.

Other instances where curses occur, where they are either identified with Furies or actuating these, will be considered later.

iv

In the tragedies of Sophocles curses have also their mission to fulfil. In the *Oedipus Rex*, ll. 90 ff., the curse on Laius' murderer is said to be causing all the national distress. In the same play, ll. 417-9, Teiresias tells Oedipus,

Yea, like a twy-lashed scourge, thy mother's curse
And sire's, dread-footed, shall from this land chase
Thee, who look'st now on light, on darkness then!)

In ll. 744-5, Oedipus begins to feel the horror of his own curse upon him.

Woe's me! meseems that into curses dread

I have but now unwitting thrust myself!

He blames none but himself, but they are not the less potent for that, he declares in ll. 819-20.

Yea, 'twas none,

Save I, that laid these curses on myself!

(The *Antigone* opens with the declaration by the heroine that her father's curses are still working out their fulfilment.

Ismene, sister mine, one soul with me,
 This know'st thou-- all the Curse of Oedipus
 On us twain Zeus fulfillleth ere we die?

In the Oedipus Rex, ll. 246-51, Oedipus solemnly curses the murderer of Laius and all who aid him or refuse to act against him.

I curse the murderer-- whether secretly
 Alone he did it, or with many leagued,--
 To waste his vile life vilely in misery.
 I pray withal that I, if he become
 Inmate of my house with my privity,

May suffer all the curse I have thrust on these.

In the Oedipus Coloneus, ll. 421-2, Oedipus condemns Eteocles and Polyneices to continual strife, because they have set personal ambition above filial piety.

Now the gods quench the fire of fated feud
 Between them never! etc.

How this curse was fulfilled is told by Aeschylus and Euripides, and inferred by Sophocles himself in the Antigone.

In the same play, ll. 864-70, Oedipus calls down a curse upon Creon, for depriving him of his daughters.

Nay, may these Goddesses
 Not seal my lips yet, ere I speak this curse--
 Thou hast plucked from me, O villain, the sole eye
 That served me for the eyes that once were mine:
 Therefore may he, the all-beholding god,
 The Sun, grant this to thee and all thy line,
 To wax old even in such life as mine!

Later in the play, ll. 1375-9, he summons as allies
 against Polyneices and Eteocles the curses he had for-
 merly pronounced against them.

These curses hurled I at you twain erstwhile,
 And now as mine allies I summon them,
 That ye may so count parents reverence-meet,
 And make not light of being sons so vile
 Of a blind sire.

And he renews them in ll. 1385-90.

Of vile ones vilest, take with thee this curse
 I call down on thee-- by thy spear to win
 Never thy birthland, never to return
 To Argos' vale, but to be slain and slayer
 Of thine own brother, who hath banished thee.

Thus curse I thee, and call on Hell's black night

That fathers' malisons haunt, to take thee home!

The remaining instances in Sophocles of actual cursing occur in the Philoctetes, in ll. 1035-6, where Philoctetes curses Odysseus,

A curse on you! Ye shall be accursed, who wronged

Me, if the Gods for justice care a whit!

and in ll. 1285-6, where he repeats his curses.

Perdition seize you, chiefs of Atreus' seed,

And Lartius' son, and thee!

V

Curses in Euripides are less personified and not always so effective as in the other Greek tragedians. One thinks of them rather as a mere relief to the feelings of the one who invokes them. Nevertheless in some cases he makes use of them in a manner similar to that of his great predecessors.

In the *Electra*, l. 1307, Castor declares that the curse of their ancestors was prepared for both *Electra* and *Orestes*.

The curse of your sires was for twain prepared,

And it hath not spared.

In the *Iphigeneia in Taurica*, ll. 774 and 778-9, the heroine in her letter threatens to become a curse to *Orestes* if he allows her to die in *Taurica*.

"Bear me to Argos, brother, ere I die, -----

Else to thine house will I become a curse,

Orestes."

In the *Phoenissae*, ll. 17-20, *Iocasta* relates the curse pronounced on *Laius*.

The God spake: "King of chariot-glorious Thebes,

Beget not seed of sons in Heaven's despite.

If so thou do, thee shall thine issue slay,

And all thine house shall wade through seas of blood."

Oedipus, she says, (ll. 67-8), has cursed his sons.

A curse most impious hurled he at his sons,

That they may share their heritage with the sword.

A curse will also come upon her through Polyneices, since his bridal was not properly carried out in his own city.

Son, on thy mother falls

Thine alien bridal curse to haunt her ever.

Thee shall a voice from Laius' grave accuse.

The spousal torch for thee I kindled never,

As happy mothers use;

Nor for thy bridal did Ismenus bring thee

Joy of the bath; nor at the entering-in

Of this thy bride did Theban maidens sing thee.

A curse be on that sin,

etc.

In the Hippolytus, ll. 887-90, Theseus calls down a curse upon his son for his supposed outrage of Phaedra.

Father Poseidon, thou didst promise me
Three curses once. Do thou with one of these
Destroy my son: may he not 'scape this day,
If soothfast curses thou hast granted me.

The fulfilment of this curse is recorded in ll. 1166-8.

His proper chariot-team hath dealt him death,
And thy mouth's curses, which thou didst call down
From the Sea's Lord, thy father, on thy son.

vi

Turning now to the sole tragedian of Rome whose works are left to us, we may examine the occurrence of curses in the plays of Seneca. These are of course chiefly highly elaborated versions of Euripides or Sophocles. In the *Medea*, ll. 19-26, the heroine calls down a curse upon the head of Jason.

Worse for Jason I would ask--

Life! Let him roam in fear through unknown lands,

An exile, hated, poor, without a home;

A guest now too well known, let him, in vain,

Seek alien doors, and long for me, his wife!

And, yet a last revenge, let him beget

Sons like their father, daughters like their mother!

In the *Hippolytus*, ll. 1001-3, Theseus curses his son.

Let not Hippolytus behold again

The day's fair light, but let the youth go down

Among the wrathful spirits of the dead.

And the curse is duly announced as fulfilled.

Alas, alas, Hippolytus is dead!

In the *Oedipus*, ll. 284 ff., the king solemnly curses the murderer of his predecessor Laius.

Grant that he who slew the king
 May find no peaceful home, no household gods,
 Nor hospitable land. May he lament
 A shameful marriage, offspring odious;
 Let him commit the crime from which I fled--
 What worse could it be possible to wish?

In the *Thyestes*, the calamities originate in the fact that Pelops has cursed Atreus and Thyestes for the murder of Chrysippus. The ghost of Tantalus opens the play, pursued by a Fury, who calls up curse after curse upon his house. The passage is much too long for quotation; but she raises a vision of such dire terrors that the spirit is appalled, and attempts to rush headlong back to Hades; but is stayed by the Erinnys, who holds him to his allotted task.

Seneca, however, is mainly concerned with action--and action that leaves nothing to the imagination. In his opinion, therefore, curses are much better executed with all the horrid elaboration he can devise, than merely pronounced and left to work out their own fulfilment.

vii

Next in order come those spirits known to the Greeks as Erinyes or Eumenides, and to the Romans as Furies. In origin they are of course the vengeance-seeking ghosts fulfilling the curses they had uttered upon earth. In the tragedies under consideration they are sometimes identified with curses and sometimes with ghosts. Usually, however, they are endowed with distinct personalities. Their number is generally three, whose names are Allecto, Tisiphone, and Megaera. In the Eumenides of Aeschylus, however, they are "a troop", who form the Chorus and give its title to the play. Their action is very prominent throughout all classical tragedy.

In the Prometheus Bound, ll. 515-6, we are told that the Furies assist the Fates in guiding Necessity.

CHO.

But who of Destiny

Controls the helm?

PROM.

The Fates of triple form,

And unforgetting Furies.

In the Seven Against Thebes, in a passage already referred to, (ll. 70 ff.,), Eteocles identifies them with

his father's curse, and is followed in this identification by the Chorus in ll. 700-1. Perhaps the clearest interpretation is that the curse is urging on the Erinnys, which in turn is driving forward a Demon of destruction. In ll. 886-7 Erinnys is said to have fulfilled the curse of Oedipus.

Well doth the Fury of Oedipus fulfil

The dread presaging of a father's will.

In ll. 978-9, the Erinnys seems to be identified with the ghost of Oedipus.

O shade of Oedipus, this is thine hour!

O dark Erinnys, dreadful is thy power!

These avenging powers are finally triumphant.

Proud powers of ruin that have blasted all

The deeply-rooted stock of Laius' race!

In the Agamemnon, ll. 1582-4, Aegisthus declares that the doom of Agamemnon has been brought about by the Erinnyes.

I behold this man, to my great joy,

Laid in yon shroud of the Erinnyes,

So punished for his father's act of guile.

In the Choephoroe, ll. 281-3, Orestes says he has been

told that he would be pursued by the Furies.

And other onsets of the Erinnys-power

He said should follow from my father's death

If unavenged by me.

In the same play, l. 402, the Chorus invoke the Fury to their aid.

Destruction calls the Fury from her lair

With woe on woe; despair upon despair.

In l. 924, Clytaemnestra warns her son to beware of the Spirits that shall avenge her.

Ha! 'Ware thy mother's Furies. Guard thee well!

To this he replies that if he spares her, the Avengers of his father will dog his footsteps.

How 'scape I my sire's Furies, if I spare thee?

In ll. 1048-50, Orestes in his madness perceives these spirits.

Ah! ah!

What grisly troop come yonder in grey robes,

With Gorgon-faces and thick serpent-hair

Twisted in writhing coils?

A brief description follows.

In the Eumenides, ll. 46-59, the prophetess describes the Furies in more detail.

These have no wings, and they are dark of hue,
And altogether hideous, breathing out
Their snorting breath in gusts not to be borne,
Distilling from their eyelids drops of hate.
Nor is their garb befitting to come near
Man's dwelling, much less heavenly tabernacles.

Later Apollo describes their present appearance. In ll. 179 ff., Apollo enters and charges them to quit his precincts, dwelling on their tastes and natures as abhorrent to him.

Begone, I bid you, forth of mine abode!
Speed your departure from my mystic cell;
Lest, overtaken by the winged glistering snake
Steel-fanged, that darts from this all-golden bow,
Ye emit dark flesh-froth in your agony,
Vomit of heart's blood ye have drained from men.
Profane not with your presence this fair shrine;
But go where headsman execute the doom,
Where eyes are gouged, throats gashed, where robbed
of prime

Boys lose all hope of offspring, tender limbs

Are hacked or stoned; where men, impaled alive,
 Moan long and bitterly. Hear ye what feast
 Hath charms for you, ye god-abominate?
 Your every lineament declares it. Go,
 Inhabit, as beseems such forms, the den
 Of some blood-lapping lion, nor infect
 With touch accursed my oracular seat.

This is a fairly complete description of the activities and propensities of the Furies. In l. 245, they have tracked Orestes to Athena's temple at Athens. They threaten him with dire vengeance, which is to culminate in his being haled alive to the world below, there to be punished and to view the punishment of others whom they have pursued.

They sing a song to bind him in their spell, and threaten once more to avenge themselves on his living body. They identify themselves, in ll. 416-7, with curses.

We are gloom-diffusing children of dark night;

Calles "Wierd Ones" in our home beneath the ground.

Being finally appeased by Athena, the Furies are given charge of the earth and the sea, the winds and the sun-

shine, the harvests and cattle and children. They are to be termed Eumenides, the Gracious Ones; and in ll. 916 ff. they assume their office.

viii

It is of interest to note that in the Oedipus Rex of Sophocles, while the Furies are not mentioned by name, the dread calamities that have overtaken Thebes are evidently their work, since they cover precisely the field governed by them according to Athenian religion, as set forth in the Eumenides of Aeschylus.

Ay me for the numberless pangs that I bear!--my heart is woe
 For a nation that lies
 Plague-stricken, nor armour nor shield to turn aside the blow
 Man's wit may devise.
 The glory of earth is gone; her increase faileth to grow;
 Nor by birth of the children may travailing women deliverance
 know
 From their anguish-cries.
 Soul after soul flitteth forth; flashing swiftly as birds that
 soar,
 From the body it flies
 Fleeter than heaven's irresistible flame to the far-away shore
 Where the daylight dies.
 Unnumbered so do they perish--a city is this of the dead!
 Her slain everywhere

Lie unpitied with none to bewail; their corruption doth
 pestilence spread.

If this passage is compared with the final song of the
 Eumenides in Aeschylus' play, it will be seen that
 these ills are the very ones which they promise to
 avert from Athens if their worship is reverently observed
 there, and consequently the ills that they would inflict
 upon their enemies.

In the Aias the influence of Athena, who appears
 in person, is so paramount that the chthonic spirits
 play but little part. In ll. 835-844, however, Aias calls
 on the Erinnyes for vengeance.

And help me ye, O Maids that live for aye,
 Who look on mortal sufferings evermore,
 Far-striding awful Erinnyes! Do ye mark
 How wretchedly through Atreus' sons I perish!
 I pray you, swoop and seize these felons: blast them
 Most horribly! Even as ye look on me
 Falling self-slain, be they by kinsfolk slain,
 Done by their dearest flesh and blood to death.
 Come, O ye swift Avengers, Erinnyes, come!
 Glut you, spare not their host confederate!

In l. 1034, Teucer, viewing the sword of the self-slain

Aias, asks,

Did an Erinnys, then, not forge this brand?

In the *Electra*, ll. 112-5, the heroine calls on the Erinyes, along with other chthonic powers, to avenge her father's murder and the adultery of Clytaemnestra.

Erinnyes, great Daughters of Heaven,

Who look on the wrongfully dead,

And on robbers who secretly gather

The fruits of the marriage-bed---come!

In the same play, l. 792, she again invokes them, ostensibly for the sake of Orestes, really for that of Agamemnon.

Hear, Vengeance-goddess of the newly-dead!

ix

/In Euripides also these spirits of vengeance are active. The fact that they were originally personifications of the ghosts who sought vengeance on their slayers is clearly demonstrated by a speech of Cassandra in the *Troïades*, l. 457, where she declares herself one of the three Furies.

One of the Avengers Three am I whom thou from Troy shalt hale.
In the *Electra*, l. 1252, it is prophesied that the Erin-
nyes shall drive Orestes mad, and pursue him.

The dread Mierd Sisters, hound-eyed Goddesses,
Shall drive thee mad, and dog thy wanderings.
This is fulfilled very soon, as the words of *Electra*,
in the *Orestes*, l. 38, declare.

Scarce for awe I name their names
Whose terrors rack him; the Eumenides.
The unfortunate youth himself, in a fresh access of mad-
ness, implores his mother to call off her Avengers.
Mother!--'beseech thee, hark thou not on me
Yon maidens gory-eyed and snaky-haired!
Lo there!--lo there! They are nigh; they leap on me!
But they continue to torment him.

In ll. 264-5 he mistakes Electra for one of them.

Unhand me!-- of mine haunting fiends thou art--

Dost grip my waist to hurl me into hell!

In ll. 316 ff. the Chorus call on the Erinnyes to spare Orestes and grant him forgetfulness.

Terrible Ones of the on-rushing feet,

Of the pinions far-sailing,

Through whose dance-revel, held where no Bacchanals meet,

Ringeth weeping and wailing,

Swart-hued Eumenides, wide 'neath the dome

Of the firmament soaring,

Avenging, avenging blood-guilt,-- lo, I come,

Imploring, imploring!

To the son of Atreides vouchsafe to forget

His frenzy of raving.

When in l. 407 Menelaus asks Orestes by what phantoms he is plagued, Orestes replies, By three dark maidens.

Methought I saw three maidens like to night.

In l. 409, Menelaus responds,

I know of whom thou speak'st, but will not name.

For this reverence he is highly commended by Orestes in l. 410.

They are Dread Ones; wise art thou to name them not.
 In ll. 580-4, Orestes declares that had he not slain
 his mother, his father's Erinnyes would have haunted him.

Had I justified
 Her deeds by silence, what had the dead done?
 Had not his hate's Erinnyes haunted me?
 Or on the mother's side fight Goddesses,
 And none on his who suffered deeper wrong?

In the Iphigeneia in Taurica Orestes is still pursued
 by these frightful spirits.

From tired Fiends Fiends take up the chase,
 And exiled drive me, outcast from my land,
 In many a wild race doubling to and fro.

In the Hercules Furens, although the Erinnyes do not
 appear, Lyssa, (madness), who makes her entrance at l. 815,
 seems closely allied to them. The effects she produces
 bear a marked resemblance to theirs.

In the Medea, ll. 1389-90, Jason calls on Erinnys
 and Dike to smite his wife for the murder of her children.

Now the Fury-avenger of children smite thee,
 And Justice that looketh on murder requite thee!

x

Turning now to Seneca, we find Juno, in the opening lines of the *Hercules Furens*, calling up the Furies, with other of the nether spirits, to aid her against Hercules. In ll. 100 ff. she invokes them specially to take vengeance for the outrage on their realm that Hercules has committed by bringing Cerberus up to the light.

Come then, ye nimble servitors of Dis,
Wave high your glowing torch; Megaera, lead
Thy serpent-crowned and dreadful company;
Snatch from the funeral pyre with baleful hand
A huge and glowing brand; haste, seek revenge
For violated Styx; inflame his heart;
Impair his mind; so, fiercer than the fires
Of Aetna's forge he'll rage.

In the *Medea*, ll. 13-8, the heroine also invokes the Furies to assist at the marriage of Jason and Creusa.

Approach, approach,
Avenging goddesses with snaky hair,
Holding in blood-stained hands your sulphurous torch!
Come now as horrible as when of yore
Ye stood beside my marriage-bed; bring death

To the new bride, and to the Royal seed,
And Creon.

In ll. 740 ff. she calls upon them in the midst of her incantations. After debating for a long time in her own mind whether or not to slay her sons, she finally declares that an Erinnyis turns the scale and makes her her agent.

Where does that horde of Furies haste? whom seek?
For whom prepare their fires? or for whom
Brandish the infernal band the bloody torch?
The huge snake hisses writhing, as they lash
Their serpent scourges; with her hostile brand
Whom does Megaera seek?

In the Oedipus, ll. 623 ff., the ghost of Laius promises to exact vengeance on Oedipus by means of the Erinnyes.

I'll bring for bridesmaids to thy marriage-feast
The dread Erinnyes.

In the Agamemnon, ll. 759 ff., Cassandra turns to the Erinnyes, a vision of whom she appears to see.

The squalid sisters threat, they wildly lash
Their bloody whips, the left hand swings the brand,
Around their shrunken limbs the sable robe
Of mourning clings.

In the *Thyestes*, a Fury appears at l. 23 and hounds on the unfortunate ghost of Tantalus with such a long and frightful account of the ravages she will cause that he attempts to refuse to take part in them. This, however, he is not allowed to do.

In the *Hercules Oetaeus*, Deianeira, made aware of her wretched mistake, calls on Hyllus to slay her, saying that the *Erinnyes* will not pursue him therefor; but, she says, they are now pursuing her.

The dread *Eumenides* themselves will spare.

I hear their torches singing. Who is that

Whose viperous locks upon her forehead writhe,

Who brandishes her sword and shakes her wings?

Why dost thou follow me with flaming torch,

Megaera?

xi

In the Octavia, the unhappy heroine declares, in ll. 262-6, that a Fury came to her mother, to take vengeance because of her marriage to C. Silius.

Of her child,

Her husband, and the holy marriage vows
Unmindful, serpent-girdled, with loose hair,
The avenging goddess visited that couch,
Snatched from the hellish marriage-bed the torch,
And quenched its light in blood.

The ghost of Agrippina prophesies the fate of Nero, and declares it to be the work of the Erinnyes,

Th' avenging goddess has prepared

Death worthy of the tyrant, coward flight,
Lashes, and penalties that shall surpass
The thirst of Tantalus, the heavy toil
Of Sisyphus, the bird of Tityus,
The flying wheel that tears Ixion's limbs.

xii

Next in order come these dreams and visions of the night, which might be merely symbolical phantoms sent for a warning, or the very spirits of the dead themselves. Of the first sort there are several instances in Aeschylus.

In the *Persae*, ll. 176 ff., Atossa relates a prophetic dream she has had. It is described at considerable length, and of course sets forth in symbol the failure of Xerxes to add Greece to his empire.

But last night's dream was far more clear than any.

I saw two women, fairly attired, the first

In flowing Persian robes; in Dorian garb

The other;— on they came, of stature tall,

Beyond the measure of humanity,

Faultless in beauty, sisters of one stock.

But for their native dwelling-place, methought,

The one had Grecian land allotted her,

The other, Barbarous. Now, in my dream,

I saw them fall to quarrel, and my son

Perceived it, and would tame and pacify

Their anger; he would yoke them to his car

And place his collar on their necks. Whereat
 The one showed pride in such accoutrement,
 With docile paces curbing to the rein.
 But the other plunged, and with rebellious force
 Wrecked the fine chariot-gear, and tore away
 From all control, sundering the equal yoke.
 My son fell headlong, and Dareius stood
 Beside and pitied him-- whom Xerxes seeing
 Began to rend his garments in my dream.
 Such were my visions of the night.

After hearing of the disaster to the Persian arms, she
 at once recalls her dream.

Night vision of my dream, too clear and true
 Thy warning!

In the Seven Against Thebes, ll. 710-1, Eteocles de-
 clares that dreams have warned him of his doom.

The visioned dream,

Parting our patrimony, was too true.

In the Agamemnon, ll. 274-5, Clytaemnestra, when asked
 by the Chorus whether she has been troubled by dreams,
 replies that she does not at all consider them true
 prophets.

CHO. Hast thou then hearkened to some flattering dream?

CLY. No slumbrous fancies work on my belief.

In the Choephores, ll. 32 ff., the nightmare of Clytaemnestra is mentioned.

A dream-born cry at dead of night,
Stiffening the hair with wild affright,
Fierce rushing with tempestuous blast
Throughout the women's chamber passed.

Bursting from out the inmost room,
It scattered sleep, it pierced the gloom:

A prophet dread was the dire dream

That in the house raised that fell scream.

[It is again referred to in ll. 523 ff., since in spite of her previous scepticism she is forced by the vision to send offerings to Agamemnon's tomb.

OR. Say then, have ye clear knowledge of the vision?

CHO. She said she bare a serpent in her dream.

OR. Did all end so? Or whither turns the tale?

CHO. It woke up like a child in swaddling-bands.

OR. In hunger, the young dragon! for what food?

CHO. She held her breast to appease it in her dream.

OR. How 'scaped her teat the wounding of its tooth?

CHO. Nay, it drew blood thence with the clotted milk.

OR. This vision cannot vanish unfulfilled.

In ll. 540 ff. Orestes interprets it.

Surely this reading fits, and shows no flaw?

If, slipt from the same place from whence I sprang,

The serpent, swaddled on my mother's lap,

Showed fight, and gaped upon the teat that fed me,

Curdling the kindly milk with clots of gore,

That she cried out in terror of such pain,

'Tis fated, since she nursed a monstrous thing,

She die a bloody death, and I, grown up

To dragon-hood, must slay her: so this dream

Declares.

Dreams in which actual apparitions visit the living will be dealt with later. A third sort is mentioned in the Agamemnon, ll. 420 ff., where dreams only bring remembrance.

Yet visions of the night, born of regret,

Bring to his saddened soul a vain delight.

Is it not vain if, when one thinks to reap

Strange joy, the cherished object fleets from sight

(Even while with gladdening tears the eyes are wet)

On wings that follow with the steps of sleep?

xiii

(In Sophocles there occurs but one example of dream-
portents. This is in the *Electra*, ll. 410, 416-23. In
a dream Agamemnon's wraith appears to Clytaemnestra,
who is thereby so alarmed that she sends Chrysothemis
to her father's tomb with offerings to appease the spirit.

By some night-terror was she scared, meseems.

- - - - -

She saw, say they, the presence of our father,

Even thine and mine, a second time to light

Come. Then he took the sceptre he wont to bear--

Borne by Aegisthus now-- and planted it

Beside the hearth. Therefrom a sapling sprang

That bloomed and burgeoned, till Mycenae's land

From end to end was shadowed by its boughs.

xiv

In Euripides dreams are more frequent. In the Hecuba, ll. 68-76, Hecuba's dreams have coupled Polydorus with Polyxena in death.

O lightning-splendour of Zeus, O mirk of the night,

Why quake I for visions in slumber that haunt me
With terrors, with phantoms? O Earth's majestic might,
Mother of dreams that hover in dusk-winged flight,

I cry to the vision of darkness, "Avaunt thee!"--
The dream of my son who was sent into Thrace to be saved

from the slaughter,

The dream that I saw of Polyxena's doom, my dearly-
loved daughter,

Which I saw, which I knew, which abideth to daunt me.

In the Orestes, l. 618, Electra is said to have incited Orestes to vengeance by telling him of dreams sent by Agamemnon.

Yea, worthier of death than thou is she,
Who egged thee on against thy mother, aye
Sending to thine ear venomous messages,
Telling of dreams from Agamemnon sent.

In the Iphigeneia in Taurica, Iphigeneia describes, in ll. 42-55, the dream that has warned her of Orestes'

approach; but she interprets it to mean his death.

Now the strange visions that the night hath brought
 To heaven I tell-- if aught of help be there.
 In sleep methought I had escaped this land,
 And dwelt in Argos. In my maiden-bower
 I slept; then with an earthquake shook the ground.
 I fled, I stood without, the cornice saw
 Of the roof falling,-- then, all crashing down,
 Turret and basement, hurled was the house to earth.
 The central pillar alone, meseemed, was left,
 Of my sires' halls; this from its capital
 Streamed golden hair, and spake with human voice.
 Then I, my wonted stranger-slaughtering rite
 Observing, sprinkled it, as doomed to death,
 Weeping.

She later dwells on it again, in ll. 148-52.

The curse upon mine head
 Is come-- a brother dead!
 Ah vision-dream that fled
 To Night's hand clinging!
 Undone am I -- undone!

In the Alcestis, Admetus declares that after his wife's death he will call her back to him in dreams.

In dreams shalt thou
Haunt me and gladden: sweet to see the loved,
Though but as fleeting phantoms of the night.

xv

In Seneca's Troades, Andromache declares that she has had a special vision of Hector. This she proceeds to describe at considerable length.

The sweet night's second watch was hardly passed,
 The Seven Stars were turning from the height;
 At length there came an unaccustomed calm
 To me afflicted; on my eyes there stole
 Brief sleep, if that dull lethargy be sleep
 That comes to grief-worn souls; when suddenly,
 Before my eyes stood Hector, not as when
 He bore against the Greeks avenging fire,
 Seeking the Argive fleet with Trojan torch;
 Nor as he raged with slaughter 'gainst the Greeks,
 And bore away Achilles' arms-- true spoil,
 From him who played Achilles' part, nor was
 A true Achilles. Not with flame-bright face
 He came, but marred with tears, dejected, sad,
 Like me, and all unkempt his loosened hair;
 Yet I rejoiced to see him. Then he said,
 Shaking his head: "O faithful wife, awake!
 Bear hence thy son and hide him, this alone

Is safety. Weep not! Do you weep for Troy?
 Would all were fallen! Hasten, seek some place
 Of safety for the child." Then I awoke.

In the Octavia, Poppaea describes in ll. 712 ff.
 her visions on her wedding night.

But not for long might I enjoy sweet sleep.
 It seemed as though a mourning company
 Came to my marriage-chamber; with loose hair
 Rome's mothers, weeping, beat upon their breasts,
 With dreadful oft-repeated trumpet-notes.

She dwells especially on the apparition of Agrippina
 and those of her former husband and her son.

The mother of my husband, with harsh threats,
 Waved wildly in my face a blood-red torch;
 When forced, by urgent fear, I followed her,
 Earth yawned, and suddenly a mighty gulf
 Was opened for me, whither I was plunged
 Headlong, and there in wonder I beheld
 My marriage-bed, in which I laid me down

Sore wearied. With a throng of followers, then,
I saw my former husband and my son
Coming. Crispinus, parted from me long,
Hastened to kiss me, take me in his arms,
When Nero madly rushed into my home
And buried in that breast the cruel sword.

xvi

Now we turn to the original and proper inhabitants of the lower world,-- the vast concourse of souls of the dead. Their activities are many in the works under consideration, and most varied; in spite of the fact that so many have been usurped by other special functionaries. The ghosts sometimes appear spontaneously, sometimes at the summons of others; in this latter case perhaps reluctantly or even angrily. Sometimes they visit the living in dreams, whether to warn or to torment them.

They are usually most active, if they are the souls of men slain by violence, in exacting vengeance from their murderers. This they may do in person or by the agency of a Fury or of a living being. In such a case the nearest blood relative is of course held responsible to avenge the slain.

The souls of the dead are held in great reverence and worshipped by many prayers and offerings. In return for this they may be invoked for general or particular favours. If angry, they may be appeased by the proper ceremonies and offerings. Sometimes they are summoned for advice or information, and sometimes they appear

unsought to give it. As to their mode of life and the nature of their dwelling-places in the lower world, the accounts and descriptions vary considerably. An examination of the references in classical tragedy to ghosts is full of interest.

In the Persae, ll. 619 ff., Atossa calls up the spirit of her dead husband in order to inquire the meaning of her dream and the ill omens that have attended her sacrifices, and to ask his advice. The Chorus actually effect his appearing by their hymn of invocation.

We with a hymn will call

On the powers that conduct the soul o'er the darkling bound
To be kind, and release the spirit they hold in thrall.

- - - - -

Doth the sainted spirit hear us of our royal lord?

Hath he caught the clear-toned word

From our voices pealing Persian-wise in varied notes of woe?

Is my prayer by him allowed?

Or mine anguish must I utter in a strain exceeding loud?

Hath he heard my supplication there below?

Earth, and rulers of the people of the shadowy place,

Send him upward, we implore,
 Like to none that in past ages Persian earth has covered o'er,
 Persia's god, of Achaemenian race.

- - - - -

Master and lord, appear! Our lord of old,
 Rise by the summit of thy mound of rest.
 Lifting thy saffron slipper, edged with gold,
 Rearing thy turban, with the imperial crest;
 Come, father, ancient source of blessings manifold!

Come, list the woes of this strange hour of doom!
 Lord of our lord, let us behold thy form!
 There hovers o'er our hearts an evil gloom.
 Our youth are perished in a withering storm.
 Father of good, come forth; we kneel before thy tomb!

In the Seven Against Thebes, ll. 978-9, the ghost
 of Oedipus is said to be working upon his sons.

O shade of Oedipus, this is thine hour!
 The line is repeated in 987.

In the Agamemnon, ll. 345 ff., Clytaemnestra hints that the spirit of Iphigeneia may yet exact vengeance from Agamemnon for her death at Aulis.

Yea, even without offended Deity

Or tricks of chance, the spirits of the slain

May wake in wrath and bar the homeward way.

In the Choephoroe, ll. 32 ff., the wrath of the dead Agamemnon is mentioned.

One rages there beneath

Menacing death for death.

He never will forgive

His slayers, die they, or live.

In ll. 278 ff., the effect of the anger of the shades is described in more detail.

Yea, mine own soul

Should know much bitterness, were this not done.

For, so he prophesied, this land should yield

Such produce as should gladden every foe;

Whilst on us twain diseases should descend

Cankering our flesh with cruel sores all over,

Devouring what was comely, till grey hairs

Should find us blasted with such misery.

In 323 ff. the Chorus assures Orestes that the dead man if properly honoured will not lose consciousness after passing through the fire, but will point out his murderer.

Dear youth, the spirit of the dead survives

The ravening flame: his wrath long after lives.

His dying groan is answered from afar

By fierce avengers arming them for war.

In the Eumenides, l. 94, the ghost of Clytaemnestra enters and upbraids the Erinyes for having allowed Orestes to escape while they sleep. She comes, she says, in a dream.

Sleep on!-- What gain I from your slumbering?

Save that amongst my neighbours of the dead,

Thus foiled by you, still taunted with my deed,

I wander in disgrace. Be ware thereof!

They hold me guilty. Yet for me, who suffered

That cruel death at hand of mine own offspring,

No vengeance-wreaking power stands up in wrath.

Behold, I say, this matricidal wound!

See it with thy spirit; for the soul in slumber

Hath ofttimes clearer vision. By daylight

Our best foreseeings are but narrow and dim.
 Much wealth of mine ye have glutted, drink-offerings,
 Unmixed with wine, tempered to suit your heart,
 And rich burnt offerings at dead of night,
 That hour of dread, avoided by all gods.
 Now those my gifts are trampled under foot,
 And he is gone, escaping like a fawn,
 Springing with ease out of your midmost net,
 With eyes of triumph o'er your impotence.
 Hear this appeal: consider, O ye powers
 Of nether gloom! Touching my soul I speak,
 I, Clytaemnestra, now a shadowy dream.

After further taunts she finally succeeds in rousing
 them. In the Choephoroe, ll. 5-6, Orestes calls on the
 spirit of Agamemnon to aid him in avenging the crime of
 Clytaemnestra.

Father, here standing at thy tomb I bid thee

Hear me! Oh, hear!

In ll. 117 ff. Electra is instructed by the Chorus to
 call up her father's spirit to take vengeance.

CHO. Then think of those who shed this blood, and pray--

EL. How? Teach me; I am ignorant. Speak on.

CHO. Some power, divine or human, may descend--

EL. To judge or execute? What wilt thou say?

CHO. Few words, but clear: To kill the murderer.

Among the other chthonic powers she then invokes the shade of Agamemnon (1) For some change in the fortunes of herself and Orestes, (2) For the return of Orestes, (3) For her own preservation from guilt, and (4) For vengeance on the slayers of her father.

My father, pity

Thy child, and let Orestes be brought home.

For now we are lost, your dear ones: sold, disowned,

By her that bare us; who has ta'en for husband

Aegisthus, thy part-murderer, in thy room.

I am no better than a slave; Orestes

Is banished from his wealth; and o'er thy woe

They gloat in luxury and towering pride.

Then, father, hear my prayer, that to this land

Orestes come with Fortune leading him.

And for myself, grant me a better mind

Than e'er my mother had, and hands more pure.

This prayer is for thy children: on thy foes

Let thine avenger rise with recompense,

To make the murderers pay thee death for death:

(This curse must mar my perfect prayer): O father,

Send us from where thou liest some boon above,

With Heaven and Earth and conquering Right for aid!

In ll. 456-8, 479, 481, The Chorus, Electra, and Orestes all call upon the soul of Agamemnon for help in their project.

OR. father, assist thy children in their deed!

EL. Thy daughter's tears implore thee in deep need!

CHO. And we with both in steadfast harmony

Bid thee come forth to light and hear their cry,

Join this attempt against thine enemy.

- - - - -

OR. My father, king in all but in thy death,

I pray for power to rule thine ancient hall.

EL. I too, my father, with a daughter's voice,

Pray thee for power to work Aegisthus woe.

In ll. 491-509 they seek to rouse him by reminding him of the treacherous and ignominious manner in which he met his death.

OR. They took thee in the bath; father, forget not!

EL. Think how the net was first arranged for thee!

OR. When thou wast caught in fetters not of brass.

EL. Yea, in a covering shamefully contrived!

OR. Stirs not thy soul at these reproaches, sire?

EL. Doth thy dear head not rise erect in wrath?

OR. Either send Justice fighting on our side,

If thou wouldst gain requital for thy fall,

Or grant us to catch them as they caught thee.

EL. Hear this last cry, my father! Look with pity

On these thy young ones sitting at thy grave,

And feel for both, the maiden and the man.

- - - - -

OR.& EL. Hear us; this mourning we pour forth for thee.

Respect it, and thou honourest thine own cause.

In the Eumenides, l. 598, Orestes at his trial expresses confidence in his father's aid.

My father from his tomb will take my part.

He also promises, in l. 767, to guard Athens from her enemies when he shall be in his grave.

No prince or potentate of Argive land

Shall marshal hitherward the serried war.

I, then within my grave, will vex him sore

With strange disasters hard to overbear,

Crossing such enterprise with omens dire
 To balk his passage, turning all his toils
 To bitterness of soul. But while they keep
 And honour this my league with Pallas' town
 In firm alliance, they themselves shall feel
 The favour of my spirit.

In the Persae, ll. 220-3, Dareius is to be besought to
 send blessings to the earth for Atossa and Xerxes and
 withhold ill fortune.

Bid him send on thee and Xerxes blessing from beneath
 to light.

But whate'er opposed to blessing by thy dream was
 signified,

Quenched with ineffectual darkness let deep Earth
 for ever hide.

In ll. 523-4 offerings are made to the departed.

Then will I fetch from home

For Earth and parted souls an offering.

In ll. 609-18, Atossa brings propitiatory libations
 for her husband's spirit, in order that he may be dis-
 posed to give her the information she seeks.

Therefore I come on foot, without my car,

And all that former pomp, again from home,
 Bearing unto the father of my child
 Peace-offerings of power to allure the dead:
 Milk rich and white from a pure cow, bright honey
 Wrought out of flowers by the industrious bee,
 With lustral waters from a virgin spring,
 And living juice from an ungrafted vine,
 Its ancient mother, bright with quickening cheer.
 I have also from the grey-green olive-plant,
 That carries her thick foliage ever young,
 This fragrant oil; and wreaths of various flowers,
 Luxuriant offspring of all-bounteous Earth.

In the Agamemnon, ll. 516-7, the spirits of ancient kings
 and other illustrious men are invoked.

And ye, great warriors of old time, whose spirits
 Followed us forth,— receive again from war
 With kindly thoughts this remnant of the host.

In the Choephoroe, ll. 439 ff., a practice is referred to
 on which Smyth makes the following comment: "This is an
 allusion to the savage custom by which the extremities of
 the murdered man were cut off, then hung about his neck
 and tied together under the armpits. At least one object

of this "arm-pitting" was to disable the spirit of the dead from taking vengeance on the murderer."

Yet more; he was hacked; be thou ware!

In the Persae, ll. 685 ff., Dareius gives to his wife all the information and advice in his power. Xerxes' defeat, he says, is due to his impiety in bridging the Bosphorus and thus attempting to master Poseidon. The Persians must never again attack Greece. The army shall not return as a whole-- they have committed sacrilege and must pay the penalty.

Since, in ignorant youth o'erweening, he would fetter
like a slave

Bosporus divinely flowing with his Hellespontine wave,
He would alter Heaven's appointment, and with chains
from human hands

Sought to stay the stream eternal, paving for his
countless bands

Ample roadway, he, a mortal, rashly thinking he could
foil

All the gods and great Poseidon by his hammers' im-
pious toil.

Cases where honour is given to or withheld from the dead, irrespective of their favours or their bane, are also fairly common. In the Seven Against Thebes, ll. 1018-30, the honour of burial is deliberately withheld from Polyneices after his death, because during his lifetime he had come up against his own city.

But this, his brother Polyneices' corpse,
 Graveless shall be cast forth for dogs to tear,
 As minded to lay waste our Theban land,
 Had not some god stood in his path and foiled
 His spear: dead though he be, his country's gods
 Shall ban him, since he brought in their despite
 A foreign host to invade and subjugate
 Their city. Wherefore 'tis decreed for him
 To reap his recompense from fowls of the air,
 In shameful burial. No drink-offerings
 Poured on his tomb by careful hands, no sound
 Of dirgeful wailing shall enhance his fame,
 Nor following of dear footsteps honour him.

In l. 1034 Antigone declares her intention of personally granting him burial.

Though none beside consent to bury him,

I will provide my brother's funeral.

In the Choephoroe, ll. 22-3, Electra and her maidens bear libations to the tomb of Agamemnon.

In haste from yonder halls we are sped,

Bearing libation for the dead.

In ll. 84 ff., Electra is afraid to address her father's spirit with false words.

When I shall pour this tribute at the grave,

What words will be in tune, what prayer will please?

Shall I say, Father, from a loving wife

This comes to thy dear soul: yea, from my mother?

That dare I not. -- I know not how to speak,

Shedding this draught upon my father's tomb.

In ll. 154 ff. the Chorus pay honour to his soul.

Wail ye! let the tear down flow

For the lord that here lies low.

Sound his dirge before the hill,

That fends alike haps good and ill.

May the curse our hearts abhor,

May the portent we deplore,

Be averted by the power

Of the soft libation's shower!

Hear us, master, ever kind,

Hear us in thy darkened mind!

(In trying to rouse their father to vengeance Orestes and Electra offer him as inducements funeral feasts and libations.

OR. So men shall honour thee with sacrifice
And righteous banquets; else the savoury smoke
That steams on earth for souls more fortunate
Shall leave thee comfortless.

EL. And I will bring
Choice offerings from all my patrimony
In day of marriage, and will honour first
my father's tomb from the paternal hall.

Information about the dead is also not wanting. In the Supplices, ll. 227-31, they are said to be judged in Hades for crimes committed on earth.

Not even in death
Shall he who hath done it be assoiled there
Of wanton criminality. Men say,
Another Zeus beneath, among the dead,
Gives final judgement on all wrongful deeds.

The ghost of Darius remarks, in the *Persae*, ll. 681 ff., that it is difficult to come forth, though he is willing. He has, however, obtained authority among the dead; but even so, he cannot remain long away from them.

Hard the road

From Hades forth to light; the gods beneath
Are swift to seize and tardy to let go.

Yet hath my power with them prevailed. I am here,
But haste, lest I be censured for delay.

Later, in l. 842, he declares that wealth is of no advantage to the dead.

Since wealth avails not in the world of death.
In the *Choephoroe*, ll. 354 ff., it is declared that if Agamemnon had been slain at Troy he would have become an honoured servant of Pluto and Persephone.

OR. Would that some Lycian hand,

Father, had pierced thee in the Trojan land!
Then, leaving glory to thy home,
Laying in store for years to come
Bright example for thy seed,
Full of deep strength for all their need,

Thou hadst died before the wall;
And thy body there had found
Rest beneath a lofty mound,
Lightly recked of in thy hall!

CHO. Dear to great souls that there encountered death,
Worshipped and glorious on thy darkling throne,
Chief in the train of mighty powers beneath,
Thou shouldst have held the place thou here hadst
known.

For in thy time on earth thou wast a king,
With sceptred arm all spirits vanquishing.

xvii

In Sophocles also ghosts occupy a prominent place.

In the Oedipus Rex, Teiresias tells Oedipus,

Thou art unawares a foe

To thine own kin in Hades and on earth.

In the Oedipus Coloneus, ll. 581-2, Oedipus states, having led up to it by his previous speeches, that after his death he will benefit Athens.

THES. Whereby shall thy boon's value be revealed?

OED. When I have died, and burial thou hast given me.

In l. 621 he says, more specifically, that he will aid Athens against Thebes, if Theseus will grant him burial.

And what though now be summer-calm of peace

'Twixt Thebes and thee, eternal-travailing time

Brings to the birth unnumbered nights and days,

Wherein this present concord of clasped hands

Shall for slight cause be shattered by the spear;

Ah then my sleeping and earth-hidden corpse

Shall flush at last its death-chill with their blood.

In l. 788, Oedipus tells Creon,

My fierce avenging sprite shall haunt your land.

In ll. 1588 ff. Oedipus gives a detailed account of how

he is to die. His grave is never to be known, save to the kings of Athens; yet he will thence be a powerful shield to the city.

Guard thou the secret aye; and, when thou com'st
Unto thy life's end, tell it to thine heir.
And still to each successor be it told.
So Athens shall be aye thine home unharried
Of the Dragon's seed.

In the Aias, l. 1026, Teucer says, referring to the fact that Hector's gift to Aias was the sword with which the latter afterwards slew himself,

Knew'st thou

How that dead Hector would at last destroy thee?

In the Electra, ll. 416-23, the ghost of Agamemnon appears in a dream to Clytaemnestra. The passage has already been quoted above. } In the Oedipus Rex, l. 1245, Iocasta calls upon the dead Laius as she is about to slay herself.

She dashed the doors to, as she entered in,

Crying on Laius, on a man long dead.

In the Electra, ll. 406 ff., Chrysothemis bears offerings to Agamemnon's tomb, which have been sent by Clytaemnestra.

EL. - - - To whom wouldst bear these offerings?

CHR. My mother sends them to our father's tomb.

In the Antigone, the heroine repeatedly declares that obligations to the dead override those to the living.

Through longer space

My dead ones must I please, than the living.

- - - - -

I know I please whom most I ought to please.

- - - - -

If this thou say, by me shalt thou be loathed,

And by the dead shalt justly be abhorred.

Polyneices is "buried" by Antigone with such rites as circumstances permit, to avert ill. Antigone says, (ll. 515, 517, 519, 521,), that in Hades the strife of Eteocles and Polyneices is over.

CR. Dar'st thou defend a grace which wrongeth him?

ANT. This shall the dead one's witness not confirm.

CR. Yea, if thou esteem him even as yon felon.

ANT. Not, not his slave hath perished, but his brother.

CR. This came to waste Thebes, that her champion stood.

ANT. Yet Hades craveth equal laws for all.

CR. Nay, good and evil have not equal claim.

ANT. Who knows but this hath sanction therebelow?

She says the dead and Hades know all about the matter.

Whose was the deed know Hades and the dead.

And they approve of her.

The living held thee wise, but me the dead.

Aias, after having invoked all the powers of the world below to avenge him, says,

The rest in Hades shall I tell the dead.

In Od. XI, it will be remembered, Aias still in Hades nurses his grievance against Odysseus. In Aias 1393 ff. Teucer says,

But thee, O seed of old Laertes sprung,

I dread to let thee set unto these rites

Thine hand, lest I offend the dead herein.

In the Electra, ll. 51-3, Orestes must first offer sacrifices at his father's tomb, before proceeding with his vengeance.

I with drink-offerings and with grace of hair

Shorn from mine head will crown my father's tomb

First, as the god bade.

In ll. 355-6, Electra declares that by annoying his foes she pleases the dead Agamemnon;--"if kindness reach to Hades".

I gall our foes, and render homage so

Unto the dead-- if kindness reach to Hades.

In ll. 431 ff. Electra persuades Chrysothemis to lay down her offerings, since Agamemnon and the nether deities would not be honoured by them. Clytaemnestra is only storing them up for her own punishment.

Dear one, of all those things thou bear'st in hand

Lay on the grave nought; 'twere offence to men

And Gods, thereon to lay death-dues, to bring

Oblations to our sire from her who hates.

Fling to the winds, or in the dust deep-delved

Hide them, where to our father's resting-place

Nothing shall come of these: then, when she dies,

In Hades treasured for her let her find them!

Nay, were she not beyond all women grown

Sin-hardened, never would she pour this cup,

The cup of hatred, over him she slew.

Think: is he like to welcome at her hands--

That dead man in his grave-- these honour-gifts?--

At hers, with shame who slew him, like a foe,

Who lopped his hands and feet, for expiation

Wiped off the blood-gouts on his head! Dost dream

That this thou bear'st can expiate her murder?

Never! Put these things hence.

She goes on, however, to desire her sister to make offerings on her own behalf to their father, and pray him for victory over his foes, thus showing him true honour.

But from thine head

Thou of thy tresses shear the tips, from mine

Withal, woe's me! 'Tis little, yet 'tis all

I have. That give him-- this unsleeked hair,

And this my girdle void of ornament.

Bow down, and pray him from the earth to rise

Against our foes; for us a gracious champion:

Pray that with arm victorious Orestes,

His son, may live to trample on his foes,

So that hereafter we with wealthier hands

May grace him, than this day we give withal.

In l. 481, the Chorus assure Electra that Agamemnon never forgets the vengeance due to him.

For never doth he that begat thee, the king of Hel-

lenes, forget his vengeance due;

No, nor the axe forgetteth, whose fangs of brass long

ago they dared imbrue

In his blood, that axe two-edged that with outrage

foul, most foul, thy father slew.

In ll. 967-9 Electra tells Chrysothemis to assist her in revenging themselves on Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus, and promises her the approval of the dead Agamemnon and of the supposedly dead Orestes.

Nay, if thou hearken to my counselling,

First, praise of filial love from our dead sire

In Hades, and our brother, shalt thou win.

In the Trachiniae, ll. 1201-2, Heracles warns Hyllus that if he does not carry out his last request he will curse him continually from Hades.

Else will I abide

Ever in Hades loading curses on thee.

In ll. 1239-40 he repeats this.

In the Philoctetes, ll. 1311-2, it is said that Achilles is honoured among the shades.

Achilles, who had fairest fame

Once mid the living, now amid the dead.

xviii

In the *Hecuba* of Euripides, ll. 1-54, the ghost of Polydorus, who has been three days unburied, gives an account of his death. He flits over Hecuba's head, evidently, from subsequent passages, entering her dreams. He details the activities of the spirit of Achilles, who demands the sacrifice of Polyxena at his tomb before permitting the Greeks to return home.

For Peleus' son above his tomb appeared,
 And all the Hellenic host Achilles stayed,
 Even as they homeward aimed the brine-dipt oar,
 And claimed for his Polyxena my sister,
 For sacrifice and honour to his tomb.

Polydorus himself intends to cast his body up before his mother in order to gain a tomb.

For I, to gain a tomb, will-- wretch-- appear
 Before her handmaid's feet amidst the surge.

(While Helen (Hel. 962 ff.) implores Theonoe to remain her friend and keep Menelaus' presence secret, her husband as the manlier course chooses to entreat the tomb of Proteus.

O ancient, dweller in this tomb of stone,
 Restore thy trust: I claim of thee my wife;
 Sent hither of Zeus to thee, to ward for me.

Thou, who art dead, canst ne'er restore, I know:
 But this thy child will think scorn that her sire,
 Glorious of old, from the underworld invoked,
 Have infamy,-- for now it rests with her.

In the *Electra*, ll. 90 ff., Orestes declares that he has made offerings at Agamemnon's tomb before proceeding with his work of vengeance.

This night o'erpast to my sire's tomb I went;
 There tears I gave and offerings of shorn hair,
 And a slain sheep's blood poured upon the grave.

In ll. 323-31 *Electra* relates how Clytaemnestra not only fails to reverence the dead, but even openly mocks at the very grave of Agamemnon.

And Agamemnon's tomb is set at nought:
 Drink-offerings never yet nor myrtle-spray
 Had it, a grave all bare of ornament.
 Yea, with wine drunken, he, my mother's spouse,--
 Named of men "glorious"!-- leaps upon the grave,
 And pelts with stones my father's monument.

In l. 509 the old man, former tutor of Agamemnon, has turned aside in passing to offer him drink-offerings and myrtle-sprays at his tomb.

I turned, in coming, to his tomb aside,
 There kneeling, for its desolation wept,
 Poured a drink-offering from the skin I bare
 Thy guests, and crowned the tomb with myrtle-sprays.

Orestes and Electra invoke the shade of Agamemnon.

OR. Father, by foul wrong dweller 'neath the earth,
 O.M. Help, help them, these thy children best-beloved.

OR. Come, bring all those thy battle-helpers slain,

EL. All them whose spears with thee laid Phrygians low.

After Aegisthus is slain, Electra, in a passage too long for quotation, begins deliberately to heap abuse upon his senseless body. She reminds Orestes, in ll. 976 ff., that though he is loth to slay his mother, he will be impious-- lacking in reverence,-- if he fails to avenge his father.

OR. Arraigned for a mother's murder-- pure ere this,

EL. Yet impious, if thou succour not thy sire.

He replies that Clytaemnestra in her turn will demand vengeance.

Her blood-price to my mother must I pay.

In the Orestes, l. 105, Electra refuses to see Clytaemnestra's tomb. Hermione is therefore sent with Helen's offerings to the tomb. She is to call upon Clytaemnestra to be kindly-disposed towards all of them, including Electra and Orestes. She is also

promised more gifts. In ll. 255-7, Orestes, maddened by the Furies, begs his mother to recall them. In l. 425 Menelaus expresses wonder that his father's spirit does not aid Orestes.

Thy sire's avenging-- doth it nought avail thee?

In ll. 610 ff. Tyndareus declares that he will honour Clytaemnestra not only with offerings, but by assisting in the condemnation of Orestes. In 662-4 Orestes declares that as Agamemnon verily sacrificed his life for Menelaus, the latter owes it to him to preserve his heirs, Orestes and Electra.

But to my hapless father give our lives.

Mine, and my long-unwedded sister's life.

Orestes in going forth prays Agamemnon to deliver him from the vengeance of the people.

I would pray him to deliver.

Orestes, Pylades, and Electra determine to slay Helen, and thereto Orestes calls upon his father to aid them.

Father, who dwellest in dark halls of night,

Thy son Orestes bids thee come to help

Those in sore need. For thy sake suffer I

Wrongfully-- by thy brother am betrayed,

Though I wrought righteousness. I fain would seize

His wife, and slay-- be thou our help herein!

This prayer is repeated by Electra and by Pylades. They claim his help as his avengers, and promise him offerings of tears. In the *Iphigeneia in Taurica*, the heroine brings offerings to the soul of the brother whom she supposes dead.

Dear, I pour

Thy death-libation--

Fountains of mountain-kine,

The brown bees' toil, the wine,

Shed on Earth's breast, are thine,

Thy peace-oblation!

In the *Heracleidae*, ll. 1032 ff., Eurystheus promises to be a friend after his death to Athens, but a foe to the children of Heracles.

So I, thy friend and Athens' saviour aye,

A sojourner shall lie beneath your soil,

But to these and their children sternest foe,

What time they march with war-hosts hitherward.

In the *Phoenissae*, ll. 1320-1, Creon says in reference to the death of his son Menoeceus that in honouring the dead men honour the nether gods.

For he who hath not died must reverence

The nether gods by honouring the dead.

In the *Hippolytus*, ll. 1416 ff., Artemis promises her favourite eternal honour. She herself will slay the one dearest to Aphrodite, and he shall be mourned for always by maidens on the eve of their wedding.

Let be: for even in the nether gloom
 Not unavenged shall be the stroke that fell
 Upon thy frame through rage of Cypris' spite,
 For thy pure soul's and for thy reverence' sake.
 For upon one, her minion, with mine hand--
 Whoso is dearest of all men to her--
 With these unerring shafts will I avenge me.
 And to thee, hapless one, for these thy woes
 High honours will I give in Troezen-town.
 Ere their espousals shall all maids unwed
 For thee cut off their hair: through age on age
 Full harvests shalt thou reap of tears of grieving.
 Ever of thee song-waking memory
 Shall live in virgins.

In the *Medea*, l. 1371, Jason tells his wife that her children though slain live to avenge themselves on her head.

They live-- ah me! -- avengers on thine head.

In the Alcestis, ll. 625-7, Phereas bears funeral gifts to the dead Alcestis, and wishes her happiness even in the world below.

O saviour of my son, who hast raised us up

In act to fall, all hail! May bliss be thine

Even in Hades!

When Admetus swears afresh to Heracles to remain unwedded, Heracles asks whether this is to do any good to the dead Alcestis.

Look'st thou that this shall profit aught the dead?

To this Admetus replies that in any event he cannot cease to honour her.

I needs must honour her where'er she be.

xix

In the *Hercules Furens* of Seneca, l. 90, Juno calls up, with the other spirits of Hades, the "gloomy shades" of the dead, to aid her in conquering Hercules. In ll. 658 ff. Theseus describes all the habitations of the dead and the punishments of the best-known criminals there. The passage, however, is too long for quotation. In ll. 848 ff. the Chorus describe, movingly enough, the great throng of shadows in the world below.

So the silent throng

Moves onward through the plain; some slow with age,
And sad and sated with their length of days;
Some, younger, hither seem to come in haste,
Virgins who have not known the marriage yoke,
And youths with flowing hair, and little ones
Who scarcely yet can lisp their mother's name,
To these is given to carry through the gloom
Light, that they less may fear; all others walk
In darkness, sadly.

In ll. 1231 ff., Hercules promises to burn, as an offering to appease the shades of his children, his weapons and himself, since he has become Juno's tool.

For you, my sons, I break my shaft, for you
 Destroy my bow; this heavy club shall burn
 An offering to your shades; this quiver, full
 Of Hydra-poisoned arrows, shall be laid
 Upon your funeral pile; the arms that slew
 Shall pay the penalty. You, too, shall burn,
 O most unfortunate and cruel hands.

In the Troades, ll. 28 ff., Hecuba invokes, along with the gods, the shades of Priam, of Hector, and of her other children who have perished, to behold the ravage wrought by the Greeks, and that she foreboded the disaster even before Cassandra.

Witness, ye adverse deities, and ye,
 My country's ashes, and thou, Phrygia's king,
 Buried beneath the ruins of thy realm;
 Thou too, great shade, whose life was all in all
 To Troy; my numerous offspring, lesser shades;—
 Whatever ills have happened; whatsoe'er
 Apollo's raving priestess, to whose word
 The god denied belief, has prophesied,
 I first foresaw, ere yet my fated child
 Was born, nor hid my fear, but prophesied
 Vainly, before Cassandra spoke in vain.

In ll. 180 ff., Talthybios, after a lengthy prelude, which describes the upheaval of nature at so dread a portent, relates how the ghost of Achilles has appeared. The Greeks must sacrifice Polyxena, who would have been his prize had he lived, at his tomb, before they can sail over the sea to Greece.

His wrathful voice rang out along the shore:

"Ye cravens, go, refuse the honours due

My manes. Let the thankless ships set sail

Upon my seas. Not lightly Greece has felt

Achilles' wrath; that wrath shall heavier fall.

Polyxena, betrothed to me in death,

Must die a sacrifice at Pyrrhus' hand,

And moisten with her blood my tomb."

Agamemnon declares that the praise and high renown of all Greece is reward enough for the shade of Achilles; or, if it must have blood, the blood of cattle will suffice. He finally consents, however, to allow Polyxena to be sacrificed if Calchas demands it. In ll. 371 ff. the Chorus speculate helplessly on whether spirits really live on after the body has died. They believe that death engulfs body and soul.

Ask you whither go we after death?

Where they lie who never have been born.

In ll. 430-4, Andromache declares that all have been alarmed by the shade of Achilles, but that in addition Hector has appeared to her in a vision. These lines have already been quoted in another place. He has warned her to save Astyanax from the cruel fate that awaits him. She determines to conceal the child in his father's tomb, in the hope that Hector's spirit may there protect him.

I trust him to his father.

She calls up the dear ghost to care for his son as she hides him in the tomb.

O Hector, now as ever guard thine own,
 Preserve the secret of thy faithful wife,
 And to thy trusted ashes take thy child!

Andromache is torn between two decisions: whether to give up her son to death or to allow Hector's ashes to be outraged. She calls in vain on Hector's ghost to return and drive back Ulysses.

Hector, come forth the tomb;
 Break through the fates' delay, and overwhelm
 The Grecian chief-- thy shade would be enough!
 He shakes the weapon, hurls the fire-brand;
 Greeks, see you Hector? Or do I alone
 Perceive him?

Being forced to yield up Astyanax to die, however, she bids him carry to Hector her message, imploring him to return and deliver her. Surely he can do so if Achilles could.

In ll. 938 ff. Helen confesses, being urged thereto by Andromache, that Polyxena is to be sacrificed to the shade of Achilles, that he may wed her in Elysium.

Polyxena,

Whom harsh Achilles bids them give to him--

To offer to his manes, as his bride

In the Elysian Fields.

In the Medea, ll. 9-12, the heroine summons the ghosts as well as the nether gods as her allies against her faithless husband.

Chaos of night eternal; realm opposed

To the celestial powers; abandoned souls--

Later in the midst of her incantations she calls upon the shades.

Lo, I invoke you, all ye silent shades.

In 916 ff. she declares that she must slay her sons to requite the deaths of her brother and father.

And yet it is enough

For father, brother, that I have borne two.

She dismisses the ghost of her brother by slaying one son.

Brother, command the avenging goddesses
 To leave me, and the shades to seek their place
 In the infernal regions without fear;
 Here leave me to myself, and use this hand
 That held the sword-- your soul has found revenge.

She then leads her remaining child to the roof, where she
 slays him also. In the Hippolytus, ll. 1179 ff., Phaedra con-
 fesses her guilt, and tells the dead Hippolytus that she will
 follow him through the nether world. His ghost will be pla-
 cated by her death.

Let me die,

Let me placate the spirit of the dead.

In the Oedipus, ll. 176 ff., ghosts are said to have ap-
 peared on the earth.

Earth makes moan, and misty forms,

Larger than human, wander through the groves.

The auspices have failed to name the murderer of Laius, and
 Teiresias now finds it necessary to summon the shade of that
 dead king. The task is assigned to Creon.

The king

Must from the region of eternal night

Be called, must be sent forth from Erebus,

That he may name the author of his death.

Creon returns from the rites, and, being forced to speak, reluctantly begins by describing the necromantic practices of Teiresias. He has succeeded in calling up the shades; who, preceded by the malignant powers of Hades, come forth. The ghost of Laius appears, and declares the crime of Oedipus, promising to take vengeance therefor. In l. 998, Oedipus, having blinded himself, is practically dead, since he no longer beholds the light. Laius is thus avenged.

'Tis well; 'tis finished; I have paid in full

All that was due my father.

The Agamemnon opens with the appearance of the ghost of Thyestes, who describes his reasons for leaving the lower world and coming once more to the light. He also relates, in a very lengthy passage, the history of his quarrel with Atreus, and the events following thereupon. In ll. 741 ff., Cassandra has a foresight of her doom and Agamemnon's: calls aloud to Priam and Hector and others of her house that she is to join them to-day, and prays that the shades of dead Trojans may be allowed to return for a brief space to witness the fate of their arch-foe Agamemnon.

O ye shades,

To you I pray; thou flood by which the gods

Make oath, to thee I pray no less; draw back

The covering of the dusky world awhile,

That towards Mycenae Phrygia's spirit-horde
 May turn their eyes. Behold, unhappy ones,
 The fates are put to flight.

The Thyestes too begins with the appearance of a ghost, this time of Tantalus, whose son Pelops has cursed Atreus and Thyestes for the murder of Chrysippus. He declares his intention of hounding on his descendants to crime. To this task he is held, though he wishes to renounce it. In l. 1111 Atreus calls on the sons of Thyestes to take vengeance on their father for having feasted on them.

To thy sons

I give thee over for thy punishment.

In the Hercules Oetaeus, ll. 934 ff., Deianeira declares when urged by the nurse to explain how she was deceived, that in Hades she will be cleared.

Death alone

Makes guiltless those deceived.

In the Phoenissae, ll. 39-44, Oedipus declares that the spirit of Laius seeking vengeance is continually summoning him to the shades.

My father calls, I follow! Follow thee!

Yet spare! Behold where angry Laius comes

Bearing the blood-stained standard of the realm
 Snatched from him. With his hands he seeks to tear
 My eyeballs' empty sockets. Dost thou see
 My father, child? I see him!

In ll. 166 ff. he calls on his father to fulfil his vengeance and slay him.

O father, wheresoe'er
 Thou mayst be found, judge of my penalty,
 I have not thought by any punishment
 Ever to fully expiate my sin.
 I was not satisfied with death alone,
 I have not paid my ransom with my eyes.
 I wished to perish for thee limb by limb.
 At length exact the penalty I owe.
 Now I atone, 'twas then but sacrifice
 I offered; oh, be present, inward urge
 My feeble hand; oh, plunge it deeper still!

XX

In the Octavia, ll. 134-6, the heroine calls on her father Claudius to rise from the shades and help her, or else to draw her down to him.

O father, come from Hades bringing help
To thy poor child who calls to thee for aid;
Or through the riven earth lay bare the Styx,
And swiftly bear me thither.

The nurse replies that this invocation is useless, since Claudius did not really care for her in life. As soon as Nero has announced his intention of wedding Poppaea on the morrow, his mother's ghost appears, promising to take vengeance at the unholy bridal for his murder of her.

With such gloomy fires
As an avenging mother's hand prepares
For the sad altars, shall Poppaea wed
My son.

She is, moreover, herself a spirit, haunted by the wraith of her husband, whom she has poisoned.

In death my murdered husband's soul
Pursues me.

xxi

Lastly we come to the Chthonic Deities themselves, the rulers of the world of shadows. Their part in ancient tragic drama is by no means inconsiderable. Pluto and Persephone are of course the chief nether gods. The former is called indifferently Pluto, Hades, or Zeus Chthonius. In the Supplikes of Aeschylus, ll. 230-1, his jurisdiction is spoken of.

Men say,

Another Zeus beneath, among the dead,

Gives final judgement on all wrongful deeds.

In the Choephoroe, ll. 1-9, Orestes calls upon Hermes Chthonius, the guide of souls, as well as on the spirit of Agamemnon.

O Hermes of the Shades, that watchest over

My buried father's right, be now mine aid.

I come from exile to this land. Oh save me!

In ll. 18-9, he calls on Zeus Chthonius to lend aid for vengeance.

Zeus, grant me to wreak the death

Of my great father: give me gracious aid!

In ll. 380 ff. he and his sister repeat this invocation

together.

Zeus, thou that sendest from below

The late-arriving woe,

Thy vengeance falls on every hardened heart,

Nor shall a parent's name prevent the blow.

In l. 394 Electra invokes nether Zeus and all the Chthonic gods.

When shall the arm

Of Zeus, who shields from harm

The saplings round the prostrate oak,

Fall with skull-sundering stroke?

The Chorus second her in ll. 722 ff.

Hear, O Earth, O holy hill,

Where the body lieth still

Of his sire that ruled the fleet,

Hear, and send him helpers meet!

Cunning leads his crafty tread

(This the hour, the moment dread!)

Darkling Hermes' whispered word

Guards and guides the fateful sword.

Earth itself is urged to send up the dead man's soul.

OR. Earth, loose my father to o'erlook the strife!

EL. Crown all, Persephone, with fair success!

xxii

In the Oedipus Coloneus of Sophocles, ll. 1547-8,
Oedipus invokes Persephone and Hermes Chthonius.

Hither usher me,

Guide Hermes and the Queen of Underworld.

In ll. 1623 ff. these deities summon him.

And suddenly a Voice

Cried unto him, that terror-stiffened rose

Straightway the hair of all who quaking heard.

For the God called to him, and called again--

"Ho thou! thou Oedipus! Why linger we

To go hence? All too long dost thou delay!"

In the Antigone, ll. 65-6, Ismene asks pardon of those in
the underworld for not aiding to bury Polyneices.

I then will ask those in the underworld

To pardon, since I am constrained hereto.

If Antigone had not buried her brother, she says, the laws
of the Nether Gods would have taken vengeance on her.

CR. Ha! Daredst thou transgress this ordinance?

ANT. Yea!--for not Zeus, I ween, proclaimed this thing;

Nor Justice, co-mate with the nether Gods,

Not she ordained men such unnatural laws!

Nor deemed I that thine edict had such force,
 That thou, who art but mortal, couldst o'erride
 The unwritten and unswerving laws of Heaven.
 Not of to-day and yesterday they are,
 But everlasting: none can date their birth.
 Was I to fear the wrath of any man,
 And brave Gods' vengeance for defying these?

In l. 749, Haemon ranges the nether gods against Creon,
 who dishonours them by punishing Antigone.

CR: For her in any wise is all thy plea.

HAEM. And for thee, me, and all the Nether Gods.

In ll. 773 ff. Creon attempts to escape pollution by a
 quibble. He clearly shows, however, his scant reverence for
 the chthonic deities.

I'll lead her by a track of men untrod,
 And living hide her in a rocky cell,
 With food so much as serves for expiation,
 That Thebes may wholly escape pollution so.
 There crying on Hades, whom she reverences
 Alone, she shall from death be haply saved;
 Or there at least shall prove that reverence
 For things in Hades is but labour lost.

These deities are now about to take vengeance on Creon,
says Teiresias (ll. 1064 ff.), for his double affront.

For this the Avengers, whose destroying feet
Track guilt, the Erinnyes of the Gods and Hades,
Lurk to entrap thee in the selfsame curse.

In the Aias, ll. 831 ff., the hero invokes Hermes Chthonius
to his aid.

This I beseech thee, Zeus, and cry to Hermes,
The Hades-guide, to hush me gently asleep,
Not with convulsive throes, but one swift bound,
When with this sword I have cleft my heart in twain.

In the Electra, ll. 110 ff., Electra calls on Hades, Hermes
Chthonius, etc., to avenge the murder of Agamemnon, and
prays them to guide Orestes safely to this end.

O Realms to the Dark Powers given,
Guide-god, and thou, Malison dread,
Erinnyes, great Daughters of Heaven,
Who look on the wrongfully dead,
And on robbers which secretly gather
The fruits of the marriage-bed--come!
Help us! Avenge my father,
The shame of his murderous doom!

O send to me hither my brother!

I can stand not alone: in this scale

Is the load of my grief, in that other

Mine own strength-- ah, too frail!

In l. 181 the Chorus comfort Electra by reminding her of the

One

Who reigns by Acheron.

In l. 291 it is said that Clytaemnestra in her rage has called on the gods of the underworld to perpetuate the woes of Electra.

The Gods of the Underworld

Never redeem thee from thy present moans!

In ll. 431 ff. Electra tells her sister that the nether deities would be insulted by the offerings of Clytaemnestra.

Dear one, of all these things thou bear'st in hand

Lay on the grave nought: 'twere offence to men

And Gods, thereon to lay death+dues, to bring

Oblations to our sire from her who hates.

xxiii

In the Rhesus of Euripides, l. 962, Terpsichore says that Rhesus shall not go down to the lap of earth, but that she will demand him of Persephone as a friend of Orpheus.

He shall not into Earth's dark lap go down;
 With such strong crying will I pray Hell's Queen,
 Child of Demeter Lady of Earth's increase,
 To grant his soul release. My debtor is she
 To show that yet she honours Orpheus' friends.

In the Helen, ll. 968-74, Menelaus calls on Hades for aid.

O Hades, on thy championship I call,
 Who hast welcomed many dead, for Helen's sake
 Slain by my sword: thou hast them for thine hire.
 Or give them back with life's breath filled again,
 Or thou constrain this maid to show her worthy
 Of a good sire, and render back my wife.

In the Electra, l. 677, Orestes and his sister invoke Earth, along with the heavenly gods, to help them in their undertaking.

O Earth, O Queen, on whom I lay mine hands,---etc.

In the Orestes it is said, in l. 619, that Electra has urged Orestes on by telling him of the nether gods' anger against

Aegisthus.

Telling how Gods of the Underworld abhorred

Aegisthus--

In the Heracleidae, Macaria is sacrificed to Persephone.

In ll. 500 ff. she offers herself.

Myself-- I wait no bidding, ancient-- am

Ready to die, and yield me to be slain.

The sacrifice is accepted, and she is led away to death.

In the Supplices, ll. 16-8, the Thebans are refusing to honour the laws of the gods by granting the bodies of the Argive chiefs burial.

The mothers now of these,

The spear-slain, fain would lay them in the grave,

Wherefrom the victors let them, and refuse

The corpses, setting the Gods' laws at nought.

The sons are now outcasts in Hades.

Who are outcasts now in Hades, being tombless.

In the Alcestis, Death enters in person at l. 23, and begins to speak at l. 28, threatening Apollo if he dares try to snatch Alcestis from him. He goes on to speak in the same strain for some time, and declares that he obtains a better prize and greater honour in the death of the young than in

that of the old.

Yet mine the goodlier prize when die the young.
 Apollo endeavours to deter him by promising him richer
 offerings if he delays till Alcestis is old, but without
 effect. Death finally declares, in spite of Apollo's
 threats, that Alcestis is already consecrated to the
 nether gods, and must accompany him to the world below.

This woman down to Hades' halls shall pass.

For her I go: my sword shall seal her ours:

For consecrated to the nether gods

Is every head whose hair this sword hath shorn.

In ll. 252-5, Alcestis says that she already sees Charon
 awaiting her.

I see the boat with the oars twin-sweeping,

And, his hand on the pole as in haste aye keeping,

Charon the ferryman calleth, "What ho, wilt thou linger
 and linger?"

Hasten,-- 'tis thou dost delay me!" he crieth with
 beckoning finger.

In ll. 258 ff. Death is now haling her to the world of
 shadows.

One haleth me-- haleth me hence to the mansion

Of the dead!— dost thou mark not the darkling
expansion

Of the pinions of Hades, the blaze of his eyes 'neath their
caverns out-glaring?

What wouldst thou?— Unhand me! — In anguish and pain by
what path am I faring!

In ll. 843-5, Heracles says that he will find Death beside
the tomb, drinking the funeral offerings, and that he will
attack him there.

I go. The sable-vestured King of Corpses,
Death, will I watch for, and shall find, I trow,
Drinking the death-draught hard beside the tomb.

After her return from the grave Alcestis must remain speech-
less until her consecration to the nether gods is revoked.
This would be on the third day.

'Tis not vouchsafed thee yet to hear her voice,
Ere to the Powers beneath the earth she be
Unconsecrated, and the third day come.

xxiv

Juno opens the *Hercules Furens* of Seneca by calling, with some preliminary, upon all the nether deities—Discord, Strife, Crime, Impiety, Error and Madness being summoned as persons of great importance in the lower world. In ll. 658 ff. Theseus, about to narrate the deeds of himself and Hercules in the lower world, invokes the protection of the Chthonic Gods lest his speech be irreverent.

You I invoke, ye gods who rule the world,
 And thee, the ruler of the realm of shades,
 And thee whom, snatched from Enna, all in vain
 Thy mother sought. O grant that I may speak
 Truly of hidden things concealed in earth.

This, considering that his journey to Hades had been undertaken solely to aid Pirithous in capturing Persephone, would seem to indicate that the nether gods might be more tolerant than was popularly supposed. His description of the lower regions and their rulers is much too long for quotation. In ll. 1221 ff. Hercules, being made aware of his crime, calls on all the chthonic gods to hide him.

In the *Medea*, ll. 9-12, the heroine calls on the Dusky

Realms, the ghosts, and upon Pluto and Persephone.

Chaos of night eternal; realm opposed
To the celestial powers; abandoned souls;
King of the dusky realm; Persephone--

In ll. 577-8, she invokes Hecate, goddess of witchcraft, as she begins to prepare the poison for the robe which she is to present to Creusa.

Come at my invocation, star of night!
Endued with form most horrible, nor threat
With single face, thou three-formed deity!

In ll. 770 ff. she offers her horrid mixtures to Hecate in return for her assistance.

Here I pay to thee
On altars made of turf and red with blood
These solemn rites.

In the Hippolytus, ll. 1201 ff., Theseus calls on the lower world to receive him again, since his return to earth has brought nothing but disaster.

O jaws of pale Avernus and ye caves
Of Taenarus, ye waves of Lethe's stream,
So welcome to the wretched, stagnant fens,
Hide ye the wretched one, with endless woes
O'erwhelm!

In the Oedipus the plague in Thebes is heightened by the feverish fire of Phlegethon itself.

The Phlegethon

Has changed its course, and with Sidonian streams
The Styx is mingled.

Cerberus too has appeared on the earth.

'Tis said the dog of hell has burst his chains,
Forged of Taenarian iron, and now haunts
Our country.

Having at length learned of his unwitting crime, Oedipus calls upon the gods of the lower world to receive him and punish him with their direst ills.

Earth, open! Prince of Darkness, king of shades,
Take back to shades Tartarean the fate
That overthrows the laws of lineage!

In the Thyestes, ll. 1006 ff., the hero calls on Earth to yawn wide and engulf his kingdom beneath Hades itself.

Earth, ope thy prisons wide on every side;
If under Tartarus, below the place

Where dwell our kinsmen, rests a lower deep--

In the Hercules Oetaeus, ll. 940 ff., the unhappy Deianeira calls on Hades to punish her as mortal never was punished before.

XXV

The foregoing chapters bear striking and indubitable witness to the importance of disembodied spirits in the very action of classical drama. If the motifs of these plays are examined, the influence of these powerful phantoms will be felt to be even stronger.

In four of the extant plays of Aeschylus, the catastrophes or series of catastrophes may be directly traced to the revenge of a spirit. The Seven Against Thebes is the outcome of Oedipus' curse upon his sons; and the tragedies forming the Oresteia trace successively the vengeance of Thyestes, of Agamemnon, and of Clytaemnestra, upon their foes of their own household. The other three plays are exceptions to this rule from the fact that in them the direct action of the Gods themselves is so paramount that there is no room for other supernatural influence. Even so, much of the Persae is taken up with the invocation of the spirit of Dareius, ostensibly for information. The ghost however when it does rise offers little or no assistance beyond revealing the reasons for the disasters to the country-- eternal laws violated and working retribution.

In Sophocles the same prominence of supernatural in-

fluences is at once evident. With the exception of the *Philoctetes*, which is the working out of an ancient prophecy, the *Aias*, which is the action of Athena against the enemy of her favourite Odysseus, and the *Trachiniae*, which is the work of Hera, the plays of Sophocles also are concerned with the revenge, more or less delayed, of dead men. The *Electra* relates the revenge of Agamemnon upon Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus. The *Oedipus Rex* deals with the fulfilment of the curse against the line of Laius, and with Laius' own private vengeance upon his murderer. The *Oedipus Coloneus* continues the curse upon Eteocles and Polyneices, and all the action of *Theseus* is due to his consideration of the benefits to accrue to his city from the shade of Oedipus. The same curse of Oedipus upon his children is worked out to its final fulfilment in the *Antigone*, along with that pronounced against Creon. And even in the *Aias*, although, as has been observed, the direct action is that of Athena, there is more than a hint in a remark of Teucer that Aias' fate is due to the working of Hector's ghost.

Euripides has less to do with ghosts as real influences. He is more inclined to the introduction of very human gods into his dramas. Nevertheless since his sur-

viving plays possess so great numerical advantage over those of his predecessors, he too affords more than one example of a similar theme. The Hecuba owes its calamities to the demands of the spirit of Achilles, and much of its pathetic effect to the restlessness of the ghost of Polydorus. It is doubtful how much of the Helen is traceable to the influence of the spirit of Proteus. The Electra and the Orestes deal, of course, with the vengeance-seeking spirits of Agamemnon and Clytaemnestra, respectively. The Heracleidae would not be a tragedy at all but for the demand of the Queen of Shades that a maiden be sacrificed to her as the price of victory for the Athenian arms. The Phoenissae carries out Oedipus' curse: and the Supplices only avoids the haunting spirits of the dead chieftains by finally, and with considerable trouble for all concerned, granting their bodies burial.

Seneca's plays borrow these influences, along with their plots, from the Greeks. The ghost of Tantalus, driven by the Fury evoked by the curse of Myrtilus, dominates the Thyestes. That of Thyestes directs events in the Agamemnon. In the Troades, the ghosts of Polydorus and Achilles are not alone, but share their place in the play with

that of Hector. In the Oedipus the fate of the unhappy king is more directly the doing of his father's spirit than is the case in the treatment of the same subject by the Greek tragedians. In the Medea, even, the vengeance-demanding wraiths of the heroine's father and brother are forces to be reckoned with. The Octavia, being written so much after the manner of Seneca, exhibits the same traits. There is even a sort of double haunting, so to speak--Agrippina's ghost, taking vengeance upon her son, is in turn harassed by the spirit of her husband, whom she has murdered.

It is interesting to observe how the influence of spirits is made much more effective in most of the classical tragedies by the fact that ghosts themselves appear on the stage with comparative rareness: and that in such plays as do thus present them, it is by no means invariably those who make their appearance whose influence is most powerful. The apparition of Darius in the Persae, for example, is solemn and very striking from the point of view of scenic effect; but he contributes nothing directly or indirectly to the action of the play. On the other hand, that of Clytaemnestra in the Eumenides is at once

felt to possess an appalling power, and this effect is heightened by her appearance on the stage.

Sophocles never brings ghosts upon his stage at all--due, perhaps, to the fact that while his plots deal with the carrying out of ghostly revenges there is always sufficient cause in the characters of the humans of whom he writes for the events, independent of spiritual ones.

The ghost of Polydorus, in Euripides' *Hecuba*, is little less than a play-bill--a newspaper-ghost, as Vaughan terms him. The pathetic effect of the appearance of her son's body to Hecuba, however, is heightened by the assurance of its being no mere coincidence, though the dramatic effect is possibly lessened.

Seneca's ghosts are the most ghostly of all: in fact he is a master of horror, though to a modern mind his piled-up agonies become little more or less than a bore. His ghost of Laius is evoked in the most frightful manner, and fully comes up to the expectations aroused by the circumstances heralding its approach. His ghost of Thyestes suggests by the manner of its appearance that it comes at the end of a previous play rather than at the beginning of this--a play in which it has taken all the action.

His ghost of Tantalus is partly tormented and partly tormenting. Both these spirits, appearing as they do in the opening scenes of their respective plays, at once make clear that the events to follow are under their direction. The dramatic effect is somewhat similar to that caused by the apparition of Caesar in Shakespeare's play; the latter however is much superior because the ghost comes after its influence has been increasingly felt and not before it has had a chance to be displayed. Seneca however had not the art of leaving anything to the imagination of his audience.

So the Ghost developed, to become still more prominent in the literature of the Renaissance, and die a lingering death in the centuries succeeding. Modern drama is inclined to ignore him, for the most part. It will not be surprising, however, if he makes his reappearance at some future date, fresh from his long repose, and armed with all the resources of modern psychology. Such an apparition will throw into the shade all his predecessors, since modern research will provide him with a complex personality and he will have means at his disposal hitherto undreamed-of. And after one glimpse at his qualities and possibilities, we shall probably

turn with a sigh of relief, even as Tantalus would fain have turned back to Hades from the Fury who appalled him, to the more familiar and far more comfortable Shades of Classical Tragedy.

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